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FEDERAL UPDATES

A World of Resources in Spanish

The Department of Education (ED) recently released the Spanish version of the 2002-2003 Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). The application can be found online at <http://ifap.ed.gov/fafsa/0203SpanishFAFSA.html> and is just one of the many resources available for Spanish speakers seeking financial aid for postsecondary education.

Spanish FAFSA on the Web

The Spanish version of the paper FAFSA has been available for several years. The Spanish FAFSA on the Web (called “FAFSA en la Web”), however, made its first appearance during the current 2001-2002 academic year. To access the 2002-2003 FAFSA en la Web, go to www.fafsa.ed.gov beginning January 1, 2002 and click “FAFSA en español.”

TG Resources in Spanish

TG also has several financial aid information tools available for Spanish-speaking customers. As a matter of fact, TG’s nationally-recognized web site *Adventures In Education* (located at www.AdventuresInEducation.org) offers information, in English and Spanish, about educational planning, financial aid, and career preparation for middle school, high school, and college students and their families. It also provides resources for high school counselors. And since the site is offered in English and Spanish, it is available to a much broader population.

Spanish Brochures

TG also has informational brochures and other publications for students and families seeking information on financial aid, the FFELP, and loan repayment. They are available on *TGWorks Online* (www.tgslc.org) and are listed below:

- “Your Future” (“Tu Futuro”)
- “Federal Family Education Loan Program” (“Programa de Préstamos Federales para la Educación de la Familia”)
- “Default Prevention FAQs” (“Preguntas Frecuentes Acerca de Cómo Reembolsar los Préstamos Estudiantiles”)
- “Managing Repayment of Your Student Loans” (“Cómo Adminstrar el Pago de Préstamos Estudiantiles”)

More Information and Questions

For questions about the FAFSA in Spanish or for more information about TG’s Spanish publications, contact Customer Assistance at (800) 845-6267 or send an e-mail message to cust.assist@tgslc.org. TG provides Customer Assistance representatives who can assist customers in Spanish and English.

For questions about *Adventures In Education*, contact Michelle Enriquez at (800) 252-9743, ext. 4855 or send an e-mail message to michelle.enriquez@tgslc.org.

Un mundo de recursos en español

El Departamento de Educación dio a conocer recientemente la Solicitud Gratuita de Ayuda Federal para Estudiantes (FAFSA) en español para el año académico 2002-2003. La solicitud se encuentra en la red en <http://ifap.ed.gov/fafsa/0203SpanishFAFSA.html>. La FAFSA en español es uno de muchos recursos disponibles a personas de habla español que buscan ayuda económica para la educación superior.

La FAFSA en la Web

Hace varios años que se ha distribuido la FAFSA en español en forma de papel. Sin embargo, la FAFSA en la Web, forma de presentar la FAFSA electrónicamente por la Internet, se presentó por primera vez en el año académico actual 2001-2002. Para entrar a la FAFSA en la Web 2002-2003, visite www.fafsa.ed.gov a principios del año 2002 y elija “FAFSA en español.”

Recursos en español de TG

Además, TG tiene varios instrumentos sobre la ayuda económica para clientes de habla español. De hecho, el sitio de Internet de TG reconocido nacionalmente, *Adventures In Education* (encontrado a www.AdventuresInEducation.org), ofrece información en inglés y español.

El sitio contiene información acerca de la preparación educativa, la ayuda económica, la preparación para la carrera y la búsqueda de empleo, para estudiantes de la secundaria, la preparatoria, y la universidad, y sus familias. También tiene recursos para consejeros de la preparatoria. Ya que el sitio entero está disponible en inglés y español, está accesible a una población más amplia.

Folletos en español

TG tiene folletos y otras publicaciones en español para estudiantes y familias que buscan información acerca de la ayuda económica, el FFELP, y el reembolso del préstamo. Estas publicaciones están disponibles en la Internet, en *TGWorks Online* (www.tgslc.org), y son las siguientes:

- “Tu Futuro”
- “Programa de Préstamos Federales para la Educación de la Familia”
- “Preguntas Frecuentes Acerca de Cómo Reembolsar los Préstamos Estudiantiles”
- “Cómo Administrar el Pago de Préstamos Estudiantiles”

Más información y preguntas

Si tiene preguntas sobre la FAFSA o necesita más información sobre las publicaciones que ofrece TG en español, llame a la Ayuda para Clientes al (800) 845-6267 o envíe un mensaje por correo electrónico a cust.assist@tgslc.org. TG tiene representantes que hablan español e inglés.

Si tiene preguntas acerca de *Adventures In Education*, llame a Michelle Enriquez al (800) 252-9743, ext. 4855 o envíe un mensaje por correo electrónico a michelle.enriquez@tgslc.org.

Fed Up Issues under Consideration Available on Web

Congressman Howard P. “Buck” McKeon, Chairman of the Subcommittee on 21st Century Competitiveness, recently issued an announcement on the status of the Fed Up Initiative. This project was launched in May 2001 to solicit ideas from the federal student financial aid community about federal regulations that should be revised or removed. (See *Shoptalk*, Edition 120, for more information about the initiative.)

Chart of Issues

The announcement mentions a recently developed chart of issues that are under consideration within the scope of the project. The chart is “a work in progress,” says McKeon, and will be updated with additional Fed Up industry comments in future editions. The chart is available at <http://edworkforce.house.gov/issues/107th/education/fedup/regschart.htm>, and its issues range from Return of Title IV Funds to the 50% Rule to Overaward Tolerance.

Issues Addressed at Neg Reg, Reauthorization

Several of the regulatory issues raised in the Fed Up Initiative are being considered for the negotiated rulemaking (Neg Reg) sessions scheduled for spring 2002. Other issues that would require statutory change may be addressed in the next Reauthorization of the Higher Education Act, to be held in 2003.

More Information and Questions

For more information on the Fed Up Initiative, or if you have a question about an issue on the Fed Up chart, contact TG Customer Assistance at (800) 845-6267 or send an e-mail message to cust.assist@tgslc.org.

Limited Availability of NSLDS Services in December

ED recently announced the limited availability of National Student Loan Data System (NSLDS) services this month. Starting December 21, 2001, at 6 p.m. EST, the Student Status Confirmation Report (SSCR) Enrollment viewing, updating, and scheduling on the NSLDSFAP web site will be unavailable for system migration and enhancements. SSCR batch processing will also discontinue for the same period. Both services will resume on January 2, 2002.

In addition, the NSLDSFAP web site will be unavailable from 6 p.m. EST, December 28 and will resume on December 31.

Notice to Schools

Schools participating in the Title IV programs should submit or update online their December SSCR rosters by December 21. If this is not possible, schools should contact the NSLDS Customer Service Center at (800) 999-8219 or send an e-mail message to NSLDSCOE@Ratheon.com.

Notice to Guarantors

Guarantors will not receive SSCR enrollment data on December 31 due to system maintenance and enhancements. On January 7, 2002, guarantors will be sent two weeks of enrollment data.

More Information

For more information, access ED's announcement about these upcoming NSLDS outages at www.ifap.ed.gov/eannouncements/1206NSLDSDecUnavail.html.

ED's New Spring Update Conference

ED has announced its first annual Spring Update Conference, formerly the Direct Loan Conference. The event doesn't just have a new name; it also has a newly expanded invitation list. FFELP participants are encouraged to attend, as the scope of the conference has been expanded to appeal to the entire student aid community, just like this fall's Electronic Access Conference.

The Spring Update Conference, to be held from March 6-8, 2002, in Baltimore, Maryland, will include sessions on the following topics, in addition to others:

- Common Origination and Disbursement
- Verification
- Quality Assurance
- Policy and Program Updates

More Information

For more information about the Spring Update Conference, access ED's announcement ANN-01-10 at www.ifap.ed.gov/dpccletters/ann0110.html.

TG UPDATES

Focus Group Reveals Thoughts and Attitudes on FFELP, Direct Lending Issues

School and lender representatives from across the nation gathered in Austin, Texas, in early November to participate in focus group discussions regarding various aspects of the Federal Family Education Loan Program (FFELP) and the Direct Loan Program. Topics for discussion during the TG sponsored event—Camp TG—included operations, marketing, industry, and service issues.

School representatives participating in the focus group were primarily from Direct Lending schools, but all had some knowledge of or experience with the FFELP or alternative lending. During the discussions, the school representatives shared the following perceptions:

- Borrowers seldom know whether their school is a FFELP or a Direct Lending participant.
- A key advantage of the FFELP is the ability of schools to schedule and reschedule disbursements easily.
- The sale of FFELP and alternative student loans and the perceived increase in the likelihood of resulting defaults is a significant issue.
- The FFELP maintains a solid reputation for delivering quality service.
- A key problem expressed with Direct Lending is that some schools encounter difficulty with loan administration.

Additional topics discussed included training; services available from the Department of Education, lenders and/or servicers, and guarantors; distance learning; consolidation; electronic signatures; transitioning between Direct Lending and FFELP or FFELP and Direct Lending; and issues that relate to participating in both FFELP and Direct Lending.

The FFELP lender representatives also covered a wide array of issues and made the following interesting points:

- Various costs relating to the lenders' student loan programs affect the ability of lenders to maintain profitability. Among the costs mentioned were servicing, marketing to customers and maintaining customer relationships, and electronic disbursement fees.
- Interest rates are critical to the ability of student lenders to continue participation in the student loan program.
- Lenders use various tools to prevent default, including entrance and exit counseling, development of default prevention materials, interactive calculators that allow borrowers to compare estimated future payments with anticipated earnings, financial planning seminars, and the use of data from reports.

Additional topics discussed by the lenders included CommonLine, Common Account Maintenance, Common Claims Initiative, centralized disbursing agents for electronic transfers, alternative loans, borrower incentives, mergers of lenders and guarantors, and the use of multiple guarantors.

TRENDS AND ISSUES

JobGusher™ Makes Early National Launch

Following an overwhelmingly positive response from employers, schools, and students, JobGusher.com™ has launched its services on a national level before its planned January 1, 2002, launch date. JobGusher is a student-focused online recruitment service sponsored by Education Assistance Services, Inc. (EAS), a subsidiary of Texas Guaranteed (TG).

JobGusher actively recruits student and school registrants and all services are offered free to those schools and jobseekers that participate in the JobGusher program. Schools can use the site to help their students in their job searches. In addition, schools can post their own positions at any time on JobGusher—at no charge—and can even take advantage of the site’s Online Job Fair feature.

JobGusher began operating on October 19, 2001. At the end of November, the site was awarded the “Best Product Vision” Award from Catapult Systems Corporation.

The site is designed to help high school and college students as well as recent graduates find entry-level part-time and full-time employment, seasonal work, and internships. With up-to-date information and job listings, a knowledgeable, customer-focused team, and affiliations with such industry resources as *Mapping Your Future* (www.mapping-your-future.org) and *Adventures In Education* (www.AdventuresInEducation.org), JobGusher provides students and recent graduates with a recruitment site that caters to their specific needs and provides employers with a knowledgeable workforce.

More Information

To find out more about what JobGusher can do for jobseekers, schools, and employers, visit the site at www.jobgusher.com.

THIS, THAT, AND THE OTHER

ED recently announced an updated resource that provides schools with contact information—i.e., phone numbers, e-mail addresses, web site addresses, and additional information—for various financial aid programs, FISAP reporting, FAFSA support, NSLDS, IFAP, and other projects and initiatives run by ED. “Sources of Assistance for Schools” is available for schools to download at <http://sfadownload.ed.gov>. For downloading instructions, access ED’s announcement at www.ifap.ed.gov/eannouncements/1130sourcesssist.html.

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Shoptalk Online is published by Texas Guaranteed (TG). Unless specifically noted, the policies and procedures outlined in *Shoptalk Online* apply only to loans made under TG’s guarantee and not to loans underwritten by other guarantors.

To ask questions about the articles in *Shoptalk Online*, subscribe or order additional copies, please contact Communications at (800) 252-9743, ext. 2878 or communications@tgsic.org.

Edited by TG Communications and Policy and Regulatory Affairs. Designed by TG Communications.
